

Report on Engagement in Additional Work Activities Summary and Analysis of Data from Idaho's ACF 812 Report for March 2011

Section 812 of the Claims Resolution Act of 2010 requires each State to submit a 'Report on Engagement in Additional Work Activities.' The report must be submitted for two reporting periods. The first reporting period is from March 1 through March 31, 2011 and the reports are due no later than May 31, 2011. The second reporting period is from April 1 through June 30, 2011 and the reports are due no later than August 31, 2011. For each work-eligible individual (WEI) in a family receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance during the reporting period, States must collect and report the following information: (1) whether the individual engaged in any activities that are directed toward attaining self-sufficiency and (2) if yes, the specific activities that (a) do not qualify as a countable work activity, but are otherwise reasonably calculated to help the family move to self-sufficiency or (b) that could be a countable work activity, but for the fact that either the WEI has not engaged in such activities for a sufficient number of hours; the WEI has reached a maximum time limit allowed for having participation in the activity count; or the number of WEIs engaged in such activity exceeds a statutory limitation.

Summary

When Congress created TANF in 1996, one of its goals was to ensure that families getting cash assistance received help in attaining self-sufficiency. Congress established the 'work participation rate' as the tool to measure whether or not a state meets this goal. Each State must meet an overall participation rate of 50% and a 90% participation rate for two-parent families or be subject to a financial penalty. The work participation rate focuses on 'work eligible individuals' and whether or not the WEI is engaged in specific work activities.

A 'work eligible individual' is an adult (or minor parent head-of-household) recipient of TANF

A 'work eligible individual' is an adult (or minor parent head-of-household) recipient of TANF cash assistance or a non-recipient parent living with a child receiving cash assistance unless the parent is:

- a minor parent, but not the head-of-household;
- a non-citizen who is ineligible to receive assistance due to his or her immigration status;
- a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient;
- a parent providing care for a disabled family member living in the home; or
- a parent receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits

For a WEI to count towards the work participation rate, the individual must have verified participation in countable activities for a specific number of hours each month. Parents with children 6 years of age and older, must participate in a countable activity for 30 hours a week for each week they are receiving a TANF benefit. Parents with children under 6 years old must participate for 20 hours. Families with two parents must participate an average of 35 hours a week.

Countable work activities are limited to:

- Unsubsidized employment;
- Subsidized employment;
- Community work experience;
- Community service;
- On-the-job training;
- Vocational education/training; and
- Job search/job readiness

WEIs with a 30 hour requirement must participate in the above activities for at least 20 hours and then also participate for 10 more hours in the above and/or:

- Job skills training;
- Education directly related to employment; and
- Satisfactory attendance of Secondary School/GED

There are limits to how long an individual may be engaged in vocational education (twelve-month lifetime limit) and job search/job readiness training (limited to six weeks in a twelve-month period.) Because Idaho meets the definition of 'needy state' under 45 CFR § 260.30, the job search/job readiness limit increases to twelve weeks in a twelve-month period. There is an additional limit for job search: an individual's participation in job search/job readiness does not count for a week that follows four consecutive weeks of job search/job readiness activities.

Analysis

Because this is a single month of data, the results below should be regarded as preliminary. Our second report covering a three month period may produce somewhat different results. The presentation in this report is limited to those results required by the statute, and avoids more detailed analysis.

In Idaho, the number of families eligible to receive TANF assistance from March 1 through March 31 was 2,813. Of these, the number of work-eligible individuals was 197. The information collected from the 197 WEI's for the TANF March 2011 report is provided below.

Data Element 8:

The number of individuals engaged in countable activities for sufficient hours was 93.

Data Element 9:

The number of individuals that participated in countable activities that the state did not report was 40. Specific activities include:

- Job Search and Job Readiness for 1,222 hours
- Vocational Educational Training for 97 hours

Data Element 10:

The number of individuals that participated in countable activities but did not meet work requirement was 43. Specific activities include:

- Unsubsidized Employment for 490 hours
- Work Experience for 329 hours
- Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance for 1222 hours
- Vocational Educational Training for 208 hours
- Satisfactory School Attendance for 33 hours

Data Element 11:

The number of individuals in a countable work activity that did not count toward the work participation rates because the hours of participation in the activity were beyond a statutory limit for reporting the hours as countable was 2. Specific activities include:

• Job Search and Job Readiness Training for 143 hours

Data Element 12:

The number of individuals that participated in countable activities but did not meet the Federal verification standard was 29. Specific activities include:

- Unsubsidized employment for 101 hours
- Work Experience for 32 hours
- Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance for 230 hours
- Community Service for 8 hours
- Vocational Educational Training for 4 hours
- Satisfactory School Attendance for 3 hours

Analysis regarding the extent to which the information changes measures of total engagement in work activities from what will be reported by the State in the quarterly report for the comparable period

Using the approach above, we see a picture of work activity in Idaho showing more persons engaged in work activities than would be implied by a strict application of the federal work participation rate as a standard of engagement. Although the data indicates that a larger number of TANF work eligible individuals are totally engaged in work activities than Idaho's work participation rate reflects, this information will not change what will be reported by the State in the quarterly report for the comparable period. Statutory work activity time limits, enrollment caps, definitions and reporting restrictions prevent many individuals who are actively engaged in activities to help them become self sufficient from being included in the work participation rate. The statutory restrictions on the implementation of the TANF program negatively impact the State's ability to meet the mandated work participation rate and fails to properly reflect the actual participation activities being carried out by WEI adults.

Narrative describing the most common activities contained in the report that are not countable toward the State's participation rate

The data indicates that the most common activities that TANF work eligible individuals engage in that are not countable towards the State's participation rate include:

• Treatment Activities (e.g., physical or mental health, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence, physical or development activities, organizational skills workshops, and budgeting skills) 1 participant for 17 hours.

- Other hours of Participation
 - o Newborn exemption: 32 participants for 2,831 hours
 - o State Medical Exemption: 39 participants for 4,972 hours

Note: Some individuals may have been in more than one activity in the month.

ACF 812 Summary Report (March 1st - March 31st)			
	Count	Hours	
Work-eligible individuals	197		
8- Participating in countable work activities for a sufficient number of hours for the family to count			
toward the work participation rate	93		
9A- Did the work-eligible individual participate in a work activity that could count toward the work	40		
participation rate, but the State chose not to report such hours of participation in the TANF Data Report? 9 G. Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance	40	1 222	
9 I. Vocational Educational Training		1,222 97	
Total hours			
Total nours		1,319	
10A- Did the work-eligible individual participate in a countable work activity that did not count toward the			
work participation rate, because the work-eligible individual was engaged for insufficient hours to meet			
the work requirements for counting toward the work participation rates?	43		
10 B. Unsubsidized Employment (include self-employment)		490	
10 E. Work Experience		329	
10 G. Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance		1,222	
10 I. Vocational Educational Training		208	
10 L. Satisfactory School Attendance		33	
Total hours		2,282	
11A- Did the work-eligible individual participate in a countable work activity that did not count toward the			
work participation rates because the hours of participation in the activity are beyond a statutory limit for			
reporting the hours of participation as countable work activities?	2		
11 B. Job Search and Job Readiness Training	_	143	
Total hours		143	
12A- Did the work-eligible individual participate in a countable work activity, but the State did not report			
such hours of participation in the TANF Data Report because the State could not meet the Federal			
verification standards for including the hours of participation in the report?	29		
12 B. Unsubsidized Employment (include self-employment)		101	
12 E. Work Experience		32	
12 G. Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance		230	
12 H. Community Service		8	
12 I. Vocational Educational Training		4	
12 L. Satisfactory School Attendance		3	
Total hours		378	
13A- If the work-eligible individual did not participate in countable work activities for a sufficient number			
of hours for the family to count toward the overall work participation rate, did the work-eligible individual			
participate in activities that do not qualify as a countable work activity under section 407(d) of the Social	72		
Security Act, but move the family toward self-sufficiency?	72	4-	
13 E. Treatment Activities		17	

13 I. Other		7,883
Total hours		7,900
14A- Number of WEI Engaged in any Work Activity	190	